

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A device for collecting ratings on a plurality of subjects, said device comprising:
 - a processor;
 - a memory connected to said processor;
 - an input device connected to said processor;
 - an output device connected to said processor; and
 - a short-range transceiver connected to said processor, said processor, said memory, said input device, said output device, and said transceiver being contained within a case configured for portability; said processor being configured for:
 - receiving, from said input device, a first set of ratings for ones of a plurality of subjects,
 - receiving, through said transceiver, a second set of ratings for ones of said plurality of subjects, and
 - updating ones of said first set of ratings by merging ~~with corresponding ones of said second set of ratings~~, for each item, a second semantic tree from said second set of ratings into a first semantic tree from said first set of ratings, then calculating a new weighted rating based on said first semantic tree.
2. (Original) The device of Claim 1, wherein said transceiver uses Bluetooth technology.
3. (Original) The device of Claim 1, wherein said transceiver uses WiFi technology.
4. (Currently amended) The device of Claim 1, wherein said processor is further configured for receiving, from said input device, a first set of indications of interest regarding additional ones of said plurality of subjects, whereby receipt of ratings through said transceiver is triggered for said additional ones of said plurality of subjects by said first set of indications of interest.
5. (Previously presented) The device of Claim 1, wherein said processor is further configured for updating ones of said first set of ratings by calculating, for each item updated, a new weighted rating

based on an existing weighted rating from said first set of ratings, an existing weighted rating from said second set of ratings, and a similarity factor between said first set of ratings and said second set of ratings.

6. (Previously presented) The device of Claim 1, wherein said processor is further configured for updating ones of said first set of ratings by calculating, for each item updated, a new weighted rating based on an existing weighted rating from said first set of ratings, an existing individual rating from said second set of ratings, and a similarity factor between said first set of ratings and said second set of ratings.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously presented) The device of Claim 1, wherein said processor is further configured for adding comments from said second set of ratings into said first set of ratings.

9. (Original) The device of Claim 1, wherein said device is from the group consisting of a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, and a cellular phone.

10. (Currently amended) A method of collecting ratings on a plurality of subjects, said method comprising the steps of:

storing, on a portable computing device, a first set of ratings for ones of a plurality of subjects and a first set of indications of interest regarding additional ones of said plurality of subjects;

encountering, through a short-range transmission device, a user having a second set of ratings for ones of said plurality of subjects;

receiving, through said short-range transmission device, ones of said second set of ratings; and

updating ones of said first set of ratings and ones of said first set of indications of interest by merging with corresponding ones of said second set of ratings, wherein said merging comprises receiving a plurality of individual responses for each of ones of said plurality of subjects and storing said plurality of individual responses in a semantic tree network for said subject.

11. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 10, wherein

said storing step further comprising storing a policy to guide which sets of ratings are accepted; and

said receiving step or said merging step is performed dependent on said policy being met.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein said merging step is performed dependent on said second set of ratings having a similarity of at least a given level to said first set of ratings
13. (Original) The method of Claim 10, further comprising the step of broadcasting a request for ratings.
14. (Original) The method of Claim 10, further comprising the step of responding to a broadcast of a request for ratings.
15. (Canceled)
16. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~[[15]]~~ 10, wherein a rating for one of said plurality of subjects is calculated by summing all collected responses in a semantic tree network for said one of said plurality of subjects
17. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein said merging step comprises calculating a rating by summing a first rating of said first set of ratings and a corresponding second rating of said second set of ratings, using a weighting factor.
18. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein said short-range transmission device utilizes Bluetooth technology.
19. (Currently amended) A computer program product stored on a computer readable medium, said computer program product comprising:
- first instructions for storing, on a portable computing device, a first set of ratings for ones of a plurality of subjects and a first set of indications of interest regarding additional ones of said plurality of subjects;
 - second instructions for recognizing, through a short-range transmission/reception device, a user having a second set of ratings for ones of said plurality of subjects;
 - third instructions for receiving, through said short-range transmission device, ones of said second set of ratings; and
 - fourth instructions for updating ones of said first set of ratings and ones of said first set of indications of interest by merging with corresponding ones of said second set of ratings, wherein said

fourth instructions comprise receiving a plurality of individual responses for each of ones of said plurality of subjects and storing said plurality of individual responses in a semantic tree network for said subject.

20. (Previously presented) The computer program product of Claim 19, wherein
said first instructions further comprise storing a policy to guide which sets of ratings are
accepted; and
said third instructions or said fourth instructions are performed dependent on said policy
being met.

21. (Original) The computer program product of Claim 19, wherein said fourth instructions are
performed dependent on said second set of ratings having a similarity of at least a given level to said first
set of ratings.

22. (Original) The computer program product of Claim 19, further comprising fifth instructions for
broadcasting a request for ratings.

23. (Original) The computer program product of Claim 19, further comprising fifth instructions for
responding to a broadcast of a request for ratings.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently amended) The computer program product of Claim ~~[[24]]~~ 19, wherein a rating for one
of said plurality of subjects is calculated by summing all collected responses in a semantic tree network
for said one of said plurality of subjects.

26. (Original) The computer program product of Claim 19, wherein said fourth instructions comprise
calculating a rating by summing a first rating of said first set of ratings and a corresponding second rating
of said second set of ratings, using a weighting factor.